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EXAMINER

STARKS, WILBERT L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2129

DATE MAILED: 10/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/880,143

Applicant(s)

VINATI, SAMUELE

Examiner

Wilbert L. Starks, Jr.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 April 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.
3. Specifically, Applicant recites the term "personal property" without specifying whether it is car rental, limo rental, lawn mower rental, or what ever. Further, the term "real estate" is recited without specifying whether it is apartment rental, vacation rental, or what ever. Applicant also lists both simultaneously in the same claim. A system that pertains to real property is so different from one that addresses personal property that it is reasonable to say that they are different inventions. Thus, Applicant claims multiple inventions within one claim and does not specifically point out which invention is intended.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. §102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the

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applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1, 7, 9, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Thibodeau (U.S. Patent Number 6,671,697 B1; dated 30 DEC 2003; class 707; subclass 104.1). Specifically:

Claim 1

Claim 1's "A method for managing rentals of real estate..." is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 3, lines 55-60, where it recites:

"The present invention also contemplates a method for creating and searching a summary rental property table based on selected rental property search features. The method includes inputting and storing data representing multiple sets of attributes for each of a plurality of rental property addresses, creating a record for each set of attributes for each of the plurality of rental property addresses, and identifying respective data in the multiple sets of attributes similarly for each of the plurality of rental property addresses. The method further comprises creating a single searchable master table by combining the multiple sets of attributes, and periodically inputting updated data for one or more of the multiple sets of attributes for the plurality of rental property addresses."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 15-20, where it recites:

"In sum, the rental real property search system of the invention may be utilized for a search through a large group of items in a single, indexed master table, with a significant number of search features being selected. In addition, the search system is especially useful where a user is seeking for a relatively short term real property rental a specific set of attributes, including current pricing and current availability information since this information is updated on a real time basis."

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Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56 where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 1's "...and personal property items..." is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 10, lines 40 - 51, where it recites:

In a date range mode the user specifies the following:

- a. The range of dates (a start and stop date) between which he or she wants to arrive.
- b. The number of nights or days that he or she wants to stay.
- c. The maximum amount of rent that the user is willing to spend.
- d. The number of bedrooms and baths needed.
- e. The amenities needed such as (but not limited to) hot tub, swimming pool, phone, air conditioning, etc.

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, line 19, where it recites:

"In sum, the rental real property search system of the invention may be utilized for a search through a large group of items in a single, indexed master table, with a significant number of search features being selected. In addition, the search system is especially useful where a user is seeking for a relatively short term real property rental a specific set of attributes, including current pricing and current availability information since this information is updated on a real time basis."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56, where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could

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include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 1's "...via a data communication network, comprising the steps of:" is anticipated by col. 4, line 56, where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 5, lines 5-10, where it recites:

"Referring to FIG. 1A, in a presently preferred embodiment, a computer system 20 includes a host computer 22 connected to a plurality of individual user stations 24. In a presently preferred embodiment, the user stations 24 each comprise suitable data terminals, such as, e.g., personal computers, portable laptop computers, or personal data assistants ("PDAs"), which can store and independently run one or more applications (i.e., programs). For purposes of illustration, some of the user stations 24 are connected to the host computer 22 via a local area network ("LAN") 26. Other user stations 24 are remotely connected to the host computer 22 via a public telephone switched network ("PSTN") and/or a wireless network 30."

Claim 1's "...receiving rental property information via the data communication network," is anticipated by col. 7, line 46-56, where it recites:

"FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the basic premise of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 2, data representing multiple sets of attributes from various property locations are stored in Data Tables 1, 2, and 3. This data preferably represents rental rates, property attributes, and property availability for a plurality of rental property locations. Preferably once a day, in the evening, various property management companies (companies that rent vacation homes for private owners) uploads three delimited ASCII files to a main server:"

Claim 1's "...submitted from users who wish to rent out at least one of real estate and personal property items, wherein the rental property information includes at least a type and description of said at least one of a real estate and personal property item to be rented out;" is anticipated by col. 7, line 46-56, where it recites:

"FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the basic premise of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 2, data representing multiple sets of attributes from various property locations are stored in Data Tables 1, 2, and 3. This data preferably represents rental rates, property attributes, and property availability for a plurality of rental property locations. Preferably once a day, in the evening, various property management companies (companies that rent vacation homes for private owners) uploads three delimited ASCII files to a main server:"

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 8, lines 23-34, where it recites:

"As illustrated in FIG. 6, the structure of the "searchdb.dbf" table provides a very fast and flexible set of search routines. It allows the user to specify any arrival date (or even a range of arrival dates), any number of nights to stay, amenities desired (bedrooms, baths, hot tub, pool, pet home, etc.), and maximum rent that the user is willing to pay for the total stay. In just a few seconds on a typical Internet connection a result set (using our 200 home example) is presented to the user that meets his or her criteria, including the total cost of the stay. The structure of the "searchdb.dbf" table is as follows:"

Claim 1's "...storing the rental property information received via the data communication network in at least one database;" is anticipated by col. 5, lines 13-35, where it recites:

"In a presently preferred embodiment, the host computer 22 operates in conjunction with a data storage system 31, wherein the

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storage system 31 contains a database 32 that is readily accessible by the host computer 22. In a presently preferred embodiment, the database 32 is a relational database.

In alternative embodiments, the database 32 may be resident on the host computer, stored, e.g., in the host computer's ROM, PROM, EPROM, or any other memory chip, and/or its hard disk. In yet alternative embodiments, the database 32 may be read by the host computer 22 from one or more floppy disks, flexible disks, magnetic tapes, any other magnetic medium, CD-ROMs, any other optical medium, punchcards, papertape, or any other physical medium with patterns of holes, or any other medium from which a computer can read.

The host computer 22 includes a database management system ("DBMS") 34, which is one or more programs and/or hardware circuitry, configured to access data stored in the database 32. In a presently preferred embodiment, each of the user stations 24 includes its own database applications layer 36, which is one or more programs and/or hardware circuitry configured to interact with the DBMS 34."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 3, lines 55-60, where it recites:

"The present invention also contemplates a method for creating and searching a summary rental property table based on selected rental property search features. The method includes inputting and storing data representing multiple sets of attributes for each of a plurality of rental property addresses, creating a record for each set of attributes for each of the plurality of rental property addresses, and identifying respective data in the multiple sets of attributes similarly for each of the plurality of rental property addresses. The method further comprises creating a single searchable master table by combining the multiple sets of attributes, and periodically inputting updated data for one or more of the multiple sets of attributes for the plurality of rental property addresses."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 7, lines 45-56 where it recites:

"FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the basic premise of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 2, data representing multiple sets of attributes from various property locations are stored in Data Tables 1, 2, and 3. This data preferably represents rental rates, property attributes, and property availability for a plurality of rental property locations. Preferably once a day, in the evening, various property management companies (companies that rent vacation homes for private owners) uploads three delimited ASCII files to a main server:"

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 8, lines 20-35, where it recites:

"As illustrated in FIG. 6, the structure of the "searchdb.dbf" table provides a very fast and flexible set of search routines. It allows the user to specify any arrival date (or even a range of arrival dates), any number of nights to stay, amenities desired (bedrooms, baths, hot tub, pool, pet home, etc.), and maximum rent that the user is willing to pay for the total stay. In just a few seconds on a typical Internet connection a result set (using our 200 home example) is presented to the user that meets his or her criteria, including the total cost of the stay. The structure of the "searchdb.dbf" table is as follows:"

Claim 1's "...providing a plurality of customers with access..." is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 5, lines 35-46, where it recites:

"The respective database applications layer 36 of a user station 24 allows a user of the computer system 20 to access data from the database 32 by forming and submitting queries on the user station 24. In particular, in a presently preferred embodiment, a user-submitted query is converted into an SQL statement by a database applications layer 36, resident in the host computer or in respective user station 24. SQL is a standard language used in relational database management systems. An SQL query is the respective user query formatted in SQL. The SQL query is issued to the DBMS 34, which executes the SQL query and returns a responsive data result set to the user."

Claim 1's "...to said at least one database, wherein said customers wish to rent said at least one of real estate and personal property items, and wherein said access includes enabling browsing said database and selecting at least one of a real estate and personal property item to be rented." is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 7, lines 45+, where it recites:

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"FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the basic premise of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 2, data representing multiple sets of attributes from various property locations are stored in Data Tables 1, 2, and 3. This data preferably represents rental rates, property attributes, and property availability for a plurality of rental property locations. Preferably once a day, in the evening, various property management companies (companies that rent vacation homes for private owners) uploads three delimited ASCII files to a main server:

1. A property master file that lists each property the company manages along with details about that property such as number of bedrooms, number of bathrooms, amenities (like a hot tub), and the day that rentals usually start if there is a start day (Friday, Saturday, Sunday.) Additional details are added as necessary, depending on the type of homes that the company manages. If a company manages 200 properties there will be 200 delimited records in the file.

2. A rates file that details the rental rates for each property. These files usually cover the full year and break out the daily, weekly or monthly rates for the property, depending on the season."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 8, lines 20+, where it recites:

"As illustrated in FIG. 6, the structure of the "searchdb.dbf" table provides a very fast and flexible set of search routines. It allows the user to specify any arrival date (or even a range of arrival dates), any number of nights to stay, amenities desired (bedrooms, baths, hot tub, pool, pet home, etc.), and maximum rent that the user is willing to pay for the total stay. In just a few seconds on a typical Internet connection a result set (using our 200 home example) is presented to the user that meets his or her criteria, including the total cost of the stay. The structure of the "searchdb.dbf" table is as follows:

1. For each property that the company manages there are N number of records where N represents the difference when the end period date (usually the last day of the current calendar year, but theoretically any date after the present day) is subtracted from the current date. For example, if the current date is May 18, 2000 and the specified end date is Dec. 31, 2000, the number of records per property would be 227. In other words there are 227 days remaining from May 18 to December 31. Using these dates, the total size of this table for a company that manages 200 homes would be 45,400 records (200 homes.times.227 records).

2. Each record contains the following fields (sample field names are in parentheses):

- a. A property identifier field ("propno"), which uniquely identifies a particular property.

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b. Fields containing the name of the property ("propid"), number of bedrooms ("bedrooms"), number of baths (baths), the normal start day if the property rents on a weekly basis ("Strtday"-- Saturday, Sunday, etc.), and amenities like hot tubs, pools, ocean or lakeside, etc. In our sample table these amenity fields are labeled "ATTR.1," "ATTR. 2," "ATTR. 3", etc. Any number of amenities can be processed.

c. An arrival date field ("strtdate") that represents the date the guest wants to arrive. In the example using May 18 above, the first of 204 property records would have the date May 18, 2000, the next record May 19, 2000 and so on until the date Dec. 31, 2000 occurred.

d. An availability field ("free days") that contains a number that represents how many nights are available...

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 10, lines 40+, where it recites:

"In a date range mode the user specifies the following:

- a. The range of dates (a start and stop date) between which he or she wants to arrive.
- b. The number of nights or days that he or she wants to stay.
- c. The maximum amount of rent that the user is willing to spend.
- d. The number of bedrooms and baths needed.
- e. The amenities needed such as (but not limited to) hot tub, swimming pool, phone, air conditioning, etc.

The data from the user is then used to build a query against the search table. The arrival date is queried against the "strtdate" field for any record that falls between the start and stop dates specified by the user in the range of arrival dates. While most of the additional parameters used in the query are taken directly from the user's input, the portion of the query regarding the maximum rent is built using the number of days that the user intends to stay. Specifically, the field name in the search table to check for maximum rate is determined by adding the string "day" with the character value of the number of nights the user wants to stay. For example, if the user is planning to stay for 8 nights, the field queried for maximum rent is "day8", derived programmatically as "day"+"8" yielding the string "day8." This string is inserted into the SQL statement as the field queried for maximum rent."

Claim 7

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Claim 7's "A system for managing rentals of real estate" is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 3, lines 55-60, where it recites:

"The present invention also contemplates a method for creating and searching a summary rental property table based on selected rental property search features. The method includes inputting and storing data representing multiple sets of attributes for each of a plurality of rental property addresses, creating a record for each set of attributes for each of the plurality of rental property addresses, and identifying respective data in the multiple sets of attributes similarly for each of the plurality of rental property addresses. The method further comprises creating a single searchable master table by combining the multiple sets of attributes, and periodically inputting updated data for one or more of the multiple sets of attributes for the plurality of rental property addresses."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 15-20, where it recites:

"In sum, the rental real property search system of the invention may be utilized for a search through a large group of items in a single, indexed master table, with a significant number of search features being selected. In addition, the search system is especially useful where a user is seeking for a relatively short term real property rental a specific set of attributes, including current pricing and current availability information since this information is updated on a real time basis."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56 where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 7's "...and personal property items..." is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 10, lines 40 - 51, where it recites:

In a date range mode the user specifies the following:

- a. The range of dates (a start and stop date) between which he or she wants to arrive.
- b. The number of nights or days that he or she wants to stay.
- c. The maximum amount of rent that the user is willing to spend.
- d. The number of bedrooms and baths needed.
- e. The amenities needed such as (but not limited to) hot tub, swimming pool, phone, air conditioning, etc.

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, line 19, where it recites:

"In sum, the rental real property search system of the invention may be utilized for a search through a large group of items in a single, indexed master table, with a significant number of search features being selected. In addition, the search system is especially useful where a user is seeking for a relatively short term real property rental a specific set of attributes, including current pricing and current availability information since this information is updated on a real time basis."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56, where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 7's "over a data communication network, comprising:" is anticipated by col. 4, line 56, where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could

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include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 5, lines 5-10, where it recites:

"Referring to FIG. 1A, in a presently preferred embodiment, a computer system 20 includes a host computer 22 connected to a plurality of individual user stations 24. In a presently preferred embodiment, the user stations 24 each comprise suitable data terminals, such as, e.g., personal computers, portable laptop computers, or personal data assistants ("PDAs"), which can store and independently run one or more applications (i.e., programs). For purposes of illustration, some of the user stations 24 are connected to the host computer 22 via a local area network ("LAN") 26. Other user stations 24 are remotely connected to the host computer 22 via a public telephone switched network ("PSTN") and/or a wireless network 30."

Claim 7's "management means suitable to control the system for managing rentals;" is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 3, lines 55-60, where it recites:

"The present invention also contemplates a method for creating and searching a summary rental property table based on selected rental property search features. The method includes inputting and storing data representing multiple sets of attributes for each of a plurality of rental property addresses, creating a record for each set of attributes for each of the plurality of rental property addresses, and identifying respective data in the multiple sets of attributes similarly for each of the plurality of rental property addresses. The method further comprises creating a single searchable master table by combining the multiple sets of attributes, and periodically inputting updated data for one or more of the multiple sets of attributes for the plurality of rental property addresses."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 15-20, where it recites:

"In sum, the rental real property search system of the invention may be utilized for a search through a large group of items in a single, indexed master table, with a significant number of search features being selected. In addition, the search system is especially useful where a user is

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seeking for a relatively short term real property rental a specific set of attributes, including current pricing and current availability information since this information is updated on a real time basis."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56 where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 7's "at least one database which is connected to said management means and operable to be connected, via a data communication network, to a plurality of users who wish to rent property items via said data communication network;" is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 5, lines 13-35, where it recites:

"In a presently preferred embodiment, the host computer 22 operates in conjunction with a data storage system 31, wherein the storage system 31 contains a database 32 that is readily accessible by the host computer 22. In a presently preferred embodiment, the database 32 is a relational database.

In alternative embodiments, the database 32 may be resident on the host computer, stored, e.g., in the host computer's ROM, PROM, EPROM, or any other memory chip, and/or its hard disk. In yet alternative embodiments, the database 32 may be read by the host computer 22 from one or more floppy disks, flexible disks, magnetic tapes, any other magnetic medium, CD-ROMs, any other optical medium, punchcards, papertape, or any other physical medium with patterns of holes, or any other medium from which a computer can read.

The host computer 22 includes a database management system ("DBMS") 34, which is one or more programs and/or hardware circuitry, configured to access data stored in the database 32. In a presently preferred embodiment, each of the user stations 24 includes its own database applications layer 36, which is one or more programs and/or hardware circuitry configured to interact with the DBMS 34."

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Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 3, lines 55-60, where it recites:

"The present invention also contemplates a method for creating and searching a summary rental property table based on selected rental property search features. The method includes inputting and storing data representing multiple sets of attributes for each of a plurality of rental property addresses, creating a record for each set of attributes for each of the plurality of rental property addresses, and identifying respective data in the multiple sets of attributes similarly for each of the plurality of rental property addresses. The method further comprises creating a single searchable master table by combining the multiple sets of attributes, and periodically inputting updated data for one or more of the multiple sets of attributes for the plurality of rental property addresses."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 7, lines 45-56, where it recites:

"FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the basic premise of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 2, data representing multiple sets of attributes from various property locations are stored in Data Tables 1, 2, and 3. This data preferably represents rental rates, property attributes, and property availability for a plurality of rental property locations. Preferably once a day, in the evening, various property management companies (companies that rent vacation homes for private owners) uploads three delimited ASCII files to a main server:"

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 8, lines 20-35, where it recites:

"As illustrated in FIG. 6, the structure of the "searchdb.dbf" table provides a very fast and flexible set of search routines. It allows the user to specify any arrival date (or even a range of arrival dates), any number of nights to stay, amenities desired (bedrooms, baths, hot tub, pool, pet home, etc.), and maximum rent that the user is willing to pay for the total stay. In just a few seconds on a typical Internet connection a result set (using our 200 home example) is presented to the user that meets his or her criteria, including the total cost of the stay. The structure of the "searchdb.dbf" table is as follows:"

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Claim 7's "at least one server which is suitable to connect said management means to a plurality of end customers via said data communication network." is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 7, lines 46-56, where it recites:

"FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the basic premise of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 2, data representing multiple sets of attributes from various property locations are stored in Data Tables 1, 2, and 3. This data preferably represents rental rates, property attributes, and property availability for a plurality of rental property locations. Preferably once a day, in the evening, various property management companies (companies that rent vacation homes for private owners) uploads three delimited ASCII files to a main server:"

Claim 9

Claim 9's "The data communication network according to claim 7, wherein said at least one database can be queried simultaneously by said users who wish to rent out said property items, by said end customers and by personnel assigned to the management of said management means." is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56, where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 10

Claim 10's "A system for managing rentals of real estate" is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 3, lines 55-60, where it recites:

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"The present invention also contemplates a method for creating and searching a summary rental property table based on selected rental property search features. The method includes inputting and storing data representing multiple sets of attributes for each of a plurality of rental property addresses, creating a record for each set of attributes for each of the plurality of rental property addresses, and identifying respective data in the multiple sets of attributes similarly for each of the plurality of rental property addresses. The method further comprises creating a single searchable master table by combining the multiple sets of attributes, and periodically inputting updated data for one or more of the multiple sets of attributes for the plurality of rental property addresses."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 15-20, where it recites:

"In sum, the rental real property search system of the invention may be utilized for a search through a large group of items in a single, indexed master table, with a significant number of search features being selected. In addition, the search system is especially useful where a user is seeking for a relatively short term real property rental a specific set of attributes, including current pricing and current availability information since this information is updated on a real time basis."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56 where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 10's "and personal property items" is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 10, lines 40 - 51, where it recites:

In a date range mode the user specifies the following:

- a. The range of dates (a start and stop date) between which he or she wants to arrive.
- b. The number of nights or days that he or she wants to

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- stay.
- c. The maximum amount of rent that the user is willing to spend.
- d. The number of bedrooms and baths needed.
- e. The amenities needed such as (but not limited to) hot tub, swimming pool, phone, air conditioning, etc.

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, line 19, where it recites:

"In sum, the rental real property search system of the invention may be utilized for a search through a large group of items in a single, indexed master table, with a significant number of search features being selected. In addition, the search system is especially useful where a user is seeking for a relatively short term real property rental a specific set of attributes, including current pricing and current availability information since this information is updated on a real time basis."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56, where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 10's "via a data communication network, the system comprising:" is anticipated by col. 4, line 56, where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Further, it is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 5, lines 5-10, where it recites:

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"Referring to FIG. 1A, in a presently preferred embodiment, a computer system 20 includes a host computer 22 connected to a plurality of individual user stations 24. In a presently preferred embodiment, the user stations 24 each comprise suitable data terminals, such as, e.g., personal computers, portable laptop computers, or personal data assistants ("PDAs"), which can store and independently run one or more applications (i.e., programs). For purposes of illustration, some of the user stations 24 are connected to the host computer 22 via a local area network ("LAN") 26. Other user stations 24 are remotely connected to the host computer 22 via a public telephone switched network ("PSTN") and/or a wireless network 30."

Claim 10's "at least one database operable to store rental property information representing at least a type and description of at least one of a real estate and personal property item," is anticipated by col. 7, line 46-56, where it recites:

"FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the basic premise of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 2, data representing multiple sets of attributes from various property locations are stored in Data Tables 1, 2, and 3. This data preferably represents rental rates, property attributes, and property availability for a plurality of rental property locations. Preferably once a day, in the evening, various property management companies (companies that rent vacation homes for private owners) uploads three delimited ASCII files to a main server:"

Claim 10's "wherein the rental property information is received via the communication network by users who wish to rent out at least one of real estate and personal property items;" is anticipated by col. 7, line 46-56, where it recites:

"FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating the basic premise of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 2, data representing multiple sets of attributes from various property locations are stored in Data Tables 1, 2, and 3. This data preferably represents rental rates, property attributes, and property availability for a plurality of rental property locations. Preferably once a day, in the evening, various property management companies (companies that rent vacation homes for private owners) uploads three delimited ASCII files to a main server:"

Claim 10's "a user interface operable to provide a plurality of customers who wish to rent said at least one of real estate and personal property items with access to said at least one database," is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56 where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Claim 10's "wherein said access includes enabling said customers to browse said database and select said at least one of real estate and personal property items to be rented." is anticipated by Thibodeau, col. 4, lines 54-56 where it recites:

"The present invention is directed to a fast search engine for the vacation rental home market that can be part of an Internet based real time reservation system that is sold. Other potential applications could include a Windows (or other O/S) Property Management back office application."

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure. Specifically:

- A. Thibodeau (U.S. Patent Number 6,671,697 B1; dated 30 DEC 2003; class 707; subclass 104.1) discloses a rental property caching and searching system and process.

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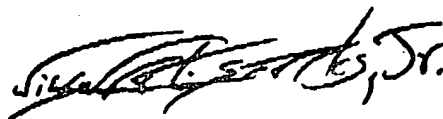
- B. Blumberg et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,385,541 B1; dated 07 MAY 2002; class 701; subclass 213) discloses a global positioning-based real estate database access device and method.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Wilbert L. Starks, Jr. whose telephone number is (571) 272-3691.

Alternatively, inquiries may be directed to the following:

S. P. E. David Vincent (571) 272-3080

Official (FAX) (571) 273-8300

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wilbert L. Starks, Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

Wilbert L. Starks, Jr.
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2129

WLS

01 October 2006